

Country: Montenegro

Background:

Official name: National Trade Facilitation Committee

Year of establishment: 2015

Motivation for its establishment: Coordination of activities in the process of trade facilitation reform.

Former multi-agency group/committee: No

Current status of the working group (running, pilot phase, not functioning, etc): Initial phase of running

Institutional Framework:

Degree of institutionalisation: The conclusion of the Government; and The Decision of the Minister of Finance in the establishment of the National Trade Facilitation Committee.

Type of organisation (ad hoc group, legal entity/organisation, etc): Legal entity established by the decision of the Minister of Finance.

Coordinating agency: Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Economy

Scope/mandate:

Monitoring of the implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement at the national level;
Coordination of activities between public and private institutions;
Providing recommendations for creation, modification and implementation of legislation and policy documents arising from WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement obligations;
Promoting and strengthening cooperation between public and private sector;
Ensuring publicity and transparency of the implementation process of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement.

Terms of reference: Terms of reference are incorporated in the Decision of establishment of the National Trade Facilitation Committee and in Rules of procedure.

Working structure of the group: The National Trade Facilitation Committee has 2 co-chairs, 13 members, secretary and administrative team.

Co-chairs are:

General director for Tax and Customs system in Ministry of Finance, and
General director for Multilateral and Regional Trade Cooperation and Economic Foreign Relations in Ministry of Economy.

Permanent technical secretariat: The National Trade Facilitation Committee has an administrative team formed by representatives of five institutions:

Ministry of Finance (secretary of the National Trade Facilitation Committee, coordinator of the

team);
Ministry of Economy;
Customs Administration;
Administration for Inspection Affairs; and
Chamber of Economy.

Funding:

Budget: No.

Budget will be needed for: Software tools, Reproduction and publications services, Translation services, Public information sessions and media outreach, Salaries of permanent secretariat employee

Objectives / Focus:

Objectives: Monitoring of the implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement and coordination of activities between public and private institutions.

Working plan: Twice per year

Monitoring and evaluation: It is thought that to the extent of 89% the NTFC fulfils its role of monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement.

Monitoring tools: Monitoring plan with indicators, Baselines and Targets.

Evaluation tools: Surveys distributed by the NTFC among trade facilitation stakeholders, Independent third-party assessments

Familiar with the following tools: UN Global Survey on Trade Facilitation and Paperless Trade Implementation, World Bank Doing Business Trading Across Borders, World Bank Logistics Performance Index (LPI), OECD Trade Facilitation Indicators, World Economic Forum Global Enabling Trade Report.

Familiar with the following tools to some extent: UNCTAD statistics (country and maritime profiles), World Economic Forum Global Enabling Trade Report.

Membership / Composition:

Public or quasi-public agencies: Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Transport and Maritime Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Customs Administration, Food Safety, Veterinary and Phitosanitary Affairs, Border Police, Agency for Medicines and Medical Devices, Agency for Protection of Nature and Environment

Private associations or entities: Chamber of Economy, Freightforwarders Association, Association of Traders, Associations of MSMEs, Montenegro Business Association and Union of Employers of Montenegro

Level of seniority of participants: Senior-70%, Middle-20%, Junior-10%

Participation:

Frequency of meetings: At least twice per year (semiannually).

Gender:

Percentage of female in the committee: 50%

Promotion / Communication:

Communication channels to keep stakeholders informed of TF meetings: Email, Administrative letters, Meetings, Website, Telephone

Undertake information sessions to stakeholders or general public: Publication of articles in the Press, Meetings, Website of the organisations that are members of the NTFC

Benefits:

Concrete operational outcomes: Implementation of concrete trade facilitation measures, Improve transparency / dialogue, Developed an implementation plan for the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement, Improved coordination, Ratification / notifications of the Trade Facilitation Agreement sent to the WTO, Reduction of costs of import, export and / or transit, Raise awareness on the importance of trade facilitation, Mainstreaming trade facilitation into other national policies

Lessons learned:

Success factors: It is thought that to the extent of 49% the NTFC is sustainable in time. Crucial factors to the sustainability of the NTFC are as follows: Cooperation among members / Common understanding and goals, Financial assistance / adequate resources, Involvement of the private sector, Close monitoring of results, Strong leadership

Greatest obstacles: Lack of funding / resources, Lack of permanent secretariat, Resistance to change, Lack of regularity of meetings

Future plans:

Plans for further development: To strengthen the political support for the process of the implementation of the Trade Facilitation Agreement.

Also, the regional integration has been considered a lot within the work of the NTFC, and it is in contact with other National Trade Facilitation Committees in the region.

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